

Jane Stone Harrison Building  
1205 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington  
District of Columbia

429  
HABS No. DC-353

HABS,  
DC,  
WASH.,  
226-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. DC-~~353~~

## JANE STONE HARRISON BUILDING

Location: 1205 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, District of Columbia.

U.S.G.S. Washington West Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates: 18.324080.4306890.

Present Owner: Cabot, Cabot and Forbes Co. 60 State Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02109.

Present Occupant: Al's Magic Shop.

Present Use: Commercial on first floor, second, third, and fourth floors vacant; to be demolished 1979.

Significance: This building is located within the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site and was once a positive component in the late nineteenth-century commercial streetscape of Pennsylvania Avenue. Erected in 1883, the building features a fine pressed-brick facade and retains its original projecting storefront. The building is remarkable in that it has survived the heavy pressures of twentieth-century merchandizing without loss or disfigurement of any of its facade elements.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1883. Charles Edmonston (see below) filed an Application for Permit to Build (No. 86, dated July 19, 1883) a four-story brick building on lot 16, square 291, at an estimated cost of \$8,000.
2. Architect/builder: Charles Edmonston listed himself as "Charles Edmonston, Agent" in the blanks for owner, architect, and builder on the Application for Permit to Build. The 1884 City Directory lists "Charles Edmonston, builder, 927 H Street, NW," the address given on the application.
3. Original and subsequent owners: According to the General Assessment Records, Jane L. Stone Harrison was the first owner of the building. From 1889 to 1894, though, James S. Stone Harrison was the owner of record. By 1899, J. L. Stone Harrison was the owner. From 1914 until 1929, Margaret Ritchie Harrison was the owner.

In 1929, Margaret R. Harrison deeded the structure and land to Robert A. Kreiger et ux. (Deed 6309-356, recorded April 13, 1929). The next year the property was deeded to Christian Heurich Sr. (Deed 6466-37, recorded July 8, 1930). The General Assessment Records indicate Amelia Heurich was owner in 1935-36. In 1936, the property was deeded back to Christian Heurich Sr. (Deed 7065-337, recorded December 31, 1936). Under the will of Christian Heurich, this property, along with all other property owned by Christian Heurich Sr. at death in the District of Columbia and not previously conveyed, was granted in fee simple to Christian Heurich Jr. Anita Heurich Eckles, and Karla Heurich King (Deed 12410-116, recorded May 13, 1965).

4. Alterations and additions:

On March 1, 1913, Charles R. Edmonston, listing himself as "owner," applied for a permit from the Engineer Department, District of Columbia, to shore up a balcony at 1205 Pennsylvania Avenue (Permit No. 4,156). This was probably in preparation for viewing the inaugural parade of President Woodrow Wilson.

In 1918 lessee James H. Yoshihiro obtained a sign permit to erect a 2' x 23' sign reading "Oriental Bazaar" (Sign Permit No. 1,402 dated November 8, 1918).

Two years later owner M. R. Harrison requested permission to erect a 4' x 20' sign reading: "Tickets for Sale Here/Royal Blue Sightseeing Tours/Starting Point Raleigh Hotel." (Sign Permit No. 1,832 dated September 22, 1920.)

In the spring of 1923, lessee James H. Yoshihiro reapplied for a permit to put up his 2' x 23' Oriental Bazaar sign. From this sequence it is not clear whether the Oriental Bazaar was temporarily out of business, or whether the Oriental Bazaar acted as a sales point for the sightseeing tours. (Sign Permit No. 9,462 Dated April 19, 1923.)

In Permit No. 7,509 dated March 2, 1923 lessee S. Yoshihiro applied for a permit stating: "4" x 4" props are to be used to support balcony with necessary braces for the inaugural parade" (of Calvin Coolidge).

Also in 1923 lessee James H. Yoshihiro requested a permit to "brace balcony, about 20 (illegible) temporary for seating for Shrine parade; 4-4" x 4" yellow pine and spruce uprights." (Building Permit No. 11,289 dated June 2, 1923.)

In 1929 the H. L. Rust Co. applied for a platform permit to "erect balcony inside building for reviewing stands" and in a second permit to "rent chairs for the inaugural parade inside the building on the second, third and fourth floors, about 80 chairs; 8 windows (sic; there are 9), 40" x 80" (available)" (Permit No. 121,201 dated February 27, 1929). These preparations were made for the inaugural parade of President Herbert Hoover.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The early occupants of the 1205 building are not known. Starting in 1918, James H. Yoshihiro (Yoshihiro Bros.) leased 1205 for his Oriental Bazaar, a business which occupied the premises until 1936 and whose large sign can still be seen above the roofs of 1201 and 1203 Pennsylvania Avenue high up on the rear east wall of the 1205 building. In 1920 tickets were on sale at 1205 for sightseeing tours. Curios were added to the oriental goods of the bazaar in 1934 and novelties were sold by Daichiro Uyeno in 1936.

In 1937 the National Gift Shop began business at 1205 Pennsylvania Avenue. Its sign is still in the left front ground floor show window of the 1205 building. Over the years since 1937, a variety of other enterprises have shared the first-floor retail space with the National Gift Shop. From 1942 to 1962, Daichiro Uyeno, who had sold novelties there in 1936, returned to sell stamps and was succeeded by his wife Mrs. Kiwa Uyeno from 1964-1967, according to the City Directory listings as well as the recollections of Al of Al's Magic Shop. Al's Magic Shop, which appears to have grown out of the National Gift Shop, was first listed in 1954, and is the present lessee of the first-floor retail space, with a sign in the right front show window. In 1975 there was also a listing for Alfred the Magician reflecting the fact that instruction and demonstrations of magic are given at 1205 Pennsylvania Avenue. From 1938 to 1942 the second floor was rented by Ira D. Baker and Ida V. Baker who ran a theatrical costume business.

In an interview, Al of Al's Magic Shop also recalled that the upper floors of the 1205 building had been sublet to Edward F. Gruner, a bookbinder, and to a company making corrugated boxes, former occupants of the second and third floors of the 1209-1211 building (five stories, since demolished). Two doorways were cut through the party wall to allow goods and machinery to be moved between the two buildings. On the third floor of the 1205 building, a good portion of a ramp built to compensate for the unequal floor levels in the two buildings is still in place. The openings in the party wall may be seen on the west wall of the 1205 building which now stands free. Al also recalled that the Uyeno's stamp business shared the back of the first floor with the National Gift Shop and that a coin dealer had also sold out of the first floor.

In an interview Al of Al's Magic Shop stated that in recent years he had been taking care of the leaks in the roof. He also mentioned that since the second floor had been vacant at the time, he had installed the large air-conditioning system for the ground floor by laying the ducts on top of the upstairs flooring and simply cutting holes through floor and ceiling for the vents and had thereby saved considerable expense. The intake and exhaust for the system are located in the previously made opening in the party wall on the second floor, and the ducts crisscrossing the second floor are about 18" in diameter.

C. Sources of Information:

Land Records, District of Columbia

District of Columbia Building Permit Records 1877-1949,  
Record Group 351, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch,  
Civil Division, National Archives.

District of Columbia General Assessment Records 1889-present,  
Washingtoniana Collection, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial  
Library, Washington, D.C.

Polk's Washington City Directories, Washingtoniana  
Collection, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library,  
Washington, D.C.

Interview with tenant.

Prepared by Bill Noble of Cabot, Cabot,  
and Forbes Co.  
for Pennsylvania Avenue  
Development Corporation  
Summer, 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This four-story brick building retains its original storefront and tiled entrance.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This four-story building measures 24'-6" (three-bay front) x 95'.

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2. Foundation: Brick, 18" thick.
3. Wall construction, finish, and color: The front facade has a veneer of red pressed brick. The rest of the walls are brick laid in a common bond.
4. Structural system: All floor and roof framing is composed of either 3" x 11" or 3" x 12" wood joist, spaced from 12" to 24" on centers and supported on the party walls.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is in the center of the front facade. The double doors are recessed in the storefront, and the sloping area between the sidewalk and the door is paved with colored ceramic tile.
  - b. Windows: The first-floor storefront is composed of two separate showcase units linked by a flat roof structure. The two showcase units rest on shallow stone slabs which run about the perimeter of each unit. All of the major components of the storefront, such as the showcase bases, colonettes and roof framing and moldings, are of wood.

On the upper floors, each opening is defined by a return of the facing veneer at the window jambs, a segmental brick arch at the head and a brownstone slab at the sill. The head of each recessed wood window frame contains an incised decorative motif. All double-hung window sash is of one-over-one design.
6. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: The flat roof slopes toward the rear of the building at a shallow pitch. Tin or terne-plated iron is the existing roofing material and was installed with a standing seam.
  - b. Cornice: The parapet and cornice of the front facade is composed of a number of horizontal brick courses consisting of molded brick shapes and terra cotta blocks. Four large projecting brick consoles divide the cornice into three equal horizontal sections. The middle two consoles support a finely-detailed brick gable.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Except for makeshift partitions, each of the four floors is a single space unencumbered by permanent structural columns or walls.

2. Stairways: The stairway is located in the northeast corner at the rear of the structure. At the first floor level the open-well, open-string stairway is composed of turned balusters and originally had a newel post. The stairway at the other three floor levels is strictly utilitarian in design.
3. Flooring: Hardwood.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The first and second floors have plaster walls, while the third and fourth floors have unfinished walls. The first floor has a matched-board ceiling, and the second-floor ceiling is plaster.
5. Mechanical equipment: On many of the floors the original gas light piping still exists, but is inoperative. A light freight elevator, of the hand-assisted type, exists in the northwest corner of the rear of the building.

Prepared by John Hecker of David McLaren  
Hart & Associates  
for Pennsylvania Avenue  
Development Corporation  
Summer, 1979

### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the demolition of buildings in Square 291. John A. Burns, AIA, was the HABS project coordinator. The historical information was prepared by Bill Noble of Cabot, Cabot and Forbes for PADC, and the architectural description was prepared by John Hecker of David McLaren Hart and Associates for PADC. The data was edited and prepared for transmittal by Alison K. Hoagland, an architectural historian in the HABS office in October, 1979. Photographs were taken by Barry Brooks in April 1979.